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HENRY WARD BEECHER.

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SALVATION BY HOPE.

"For we are saved by hope."—Rom. viii. 24.

The apostle adds,

"Hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

In his mind there seems to have been a thought of the great other life—of its magnificence; of its glory; of its beauty; of its desirableness. It was not visible, except to the inward sight. It was not tangible. It was to be reached by the principle of hope. It was to be made valuable in the struggle which every man who leads a life according to a high Christian ideal is obliged to maintain. And out of that great future there came to him, as in every age there come to all of God's servants, sources of strength and courage, so that he was able to endure the utmost stress of sadness.

"Now, all this is not singular," he says. "You are not called to a life of hope by considerations that are present and visible; by immediate victories; by anything so tangible that the eye can see it. If you saw these things, they would be present to you; but the operation of hope is always toward the future."

It is the principle by which we discern things to come, in an expectant and cheerful life. If the elements of the future life were present, there would be no office for hope. We hope when the things which we contemplate are beyond our sight. Hope is the power of perceiving and appropriating good—good that lies beyond; good that, either far or near, is still out of the present, in the future.

Hope is not simple foresight; neither is it simple expectation: because the foresight may be of evil, and the expectation may be of mischief. Hope always has cheer and comfort in it, because it con-

SUNDAY EVENING, June 22, 1873. LESSON: Heb. xi. 24-40. HYMNS (Plymouth Collection): Nos. 381, 430, 346.

fines itself to that which men desire. We never hope for misery; we never hope for mistakes; we never hope for pain. We hope for victory; we hope for coronation; we hope for love and joy; we hope for the restoration, in the other sphere, of all the things which have been broken or scattered in this.

So hope has this distinctive peculiarity, that it is sweet-minded and sweet-eyed. It draws pictures. It weaves fancies. It fills the future with delights. And then, having created them by the assistance of the imagination, it brings them near, and in some sense appropriates them. That is to say, it gives to the present hour consolation, drawn from the expectation of things that are to come.

The greatest architect, and the one most needed, is Hope. It is the greatest builder; and it builds with the flimsiest material—the fancy. Castles, mansions, gardens, lands, sweet delights, it builds beyond the flood. Ten thousand portraits does it paint, all forms of society does it picture, all events does it bring forth, in the mind. And there is that in hope which, though it knows these all to be creatures of our own conceit, still cheers and comforts us by the operation of elements which spring thus from our minds.

Now, the Christian religion stands contrasted with all other faiths by the superabundant elements of cheer and hope and comfort that are in it. He who represents the Christian faith in any other light than that of sweet beauty, and joyous hopefulness, misunderstands and misrepresents it.

In the Old Testament day, there was a certain element of hope; but it was undeveloped, and there was a vague anticipation of some future glory on earth to the Church, and the sympathy of the patriarchs with the cause of righteousness led them to rejoice in it. Although there is in the Old Testament no explicit teaching of the life to come (singular as that fact is), though there is not in the whole of the Mosaic writings a single didactic or dogmatical promise of immortality, though neither heaven nor hell was taught as an article of belief, yet there is evidence that these ideas had been developed, and the worthies of the world had more or less light upon or faith in futurity, and that light grew more and more as time went on. But hopefulness was deficient. They lived in the present. They said, "This do, and live." They pointed to the round of duties which belonged to each day, saying, "Perform all these services and ceremonies, and God shall be well pleased."

The Christian religion goes much farther. Although it recognizes instrumentalities, it regards them as mere servants; and it constantly puts emphasis on the end, in this life, of fashioning a

new manhood, and represents the other life as the great sphere into which all the streams of this are entering. Here, we lay the foundation; there, we build the superstructure. Here, we make acquaintances; there, we form indissoluble friendships. Here, all is rudimentary; there, things come to fruit and ripeness.

The Christian faith is forever looking forward, and cheering men, during their sojourn here below, in their discomforts, and cares, and burdens, by this perpetual vision of the future, in which is so much promise; in which so much is stored up; toward which the present has such continual tendencies, and with which it has such vital relationships.

If you contrast the Christian faith with the faiths of the heathen, rather than with the Hebrew faiths, the contrast is still greater. The heathen religions were mostly religions of fear. To a small extent they were religions of conscience. The ethical principle of religion was late in being born. For ages and ages, religion was one thing, and ethics were another. The religion of the heathen had no important connection with ethics; so that a man might be a very religious man, and yet be wicked and criminal,—the one not going with the other, and the one not being considered evidence of the other.

If you go back to the records of antiquity, certainly among many nations—notably among the Tuscans of Italy—we find that the element of fear predominated. There were no ethical treatises, there was no system of religion among them: all we have by which to judge of them is their art. Archæologists tell us that, of all the memorials which remain of the old Tuscans, there is not one emblem of hope; that there is not on the fragments of their works of art, nor among the inscriptions on their tombs, one pleasant picture of victory or faith; that every single one of their figures or illustrations represents gross elements of fear or horror; that all their pictures which depict dying, or futurity, are pictures of gorgons—hideous creatures of the imagination.

Over against such brutal faiths, the Christian faith stands up, the bright image of the Sun—the Day-Star—the Sun of Righteousness.

Hope is a distinct and peculiar faculty. It is one of the original attributes of mankind. Like all other faculties, it exists with different degrees of power in different persons. Some have a genius for hope. We call them *sanguine*, their temperament being supposed to have much to do with the flow of the blood. Physiologists have designated the different temperaments of men with reference in part to their mental peculiarities.

We all discern the difference between men. Some live by the

power of conscience. Duty, *duty*, DUTY, is their watchword. Some live and work by the power of caution, apprehension, solicitude, constant grinding anxiety. Others are cheerful and expectant. They sing all day, and would sing all night, if they were awake. It is their nature. There are many men who, if you bend them down to the ground, break short off at the stump. There are other men who, if you bend them down to the ground, are like the young hickory. The moment the pressure is removed, they spring back again, and are as straight as ever. Many men are subtle, facile; forever, and under all circumstances, rejuvenating themselves. There is an element of hope in them. To be sure, yesterday was disastrous; but to-day has come. To be sure, to-day is dark; but it will clear off before to-morrow. To be sure, this has miscarried; but no matter, begin again.

Hope is a charming trait in men. There is something very admirable in conscientiousness; in its depths; in its endurance; in the acceptance of unwelcome labor and duty which it carries with it. There is also in the stringency of fear much that is to be admired. It carries with it great activity and intense provocation. But, after all, commend me to the sweetness and the inspiration of hope. Men who have this faculty largely developed, though they have but little education, are children of the daylight. They are perpetually alive to that which is sweetest and best in life.

It is true that hope itself has its own peculiar dangers. The whole generation of what are called *schemers* are children of hope. They are not balanced by suitable caution, reflection, and development. Schemers are pioneers of success. We always laugh at them, and never recognize how much we are under obligation to them.

If you are starting in an unknown channel, you are not glad of any mishap to him that goes ahead of you; but if he run upon a sandbank he is a buoy for you, and you do not go there; and if another strike some obstacle on the other side, you take note of him, and avoid that obstacle. You profit by the misfortunes of the two men, and go between them. You take the channel which they both meant to take, but missed.

The men who go ahead concoct new schemes, seeking something better, laying the foundation for valuable results, though they do not reap them. To be sure, the inventor, in his day, received nothing from his invention; but then, that invention bore fruit in another man's hand a little later.

Here is a man that sought some public improvement. For thirty years he has talked about it, and labored for it; and nothing

came of it during his life-time; but when he died, somebody else got the proceeds of his efforts.

It is the function, then, of schemers to go ahead; to be pioneers; to find new paths; to break up the wilderness; to prepare the way for those who come after them. We speak of them slightingly; we crown their memories with contempt almost; we say of them, "Well, they had no ballast; they never succeeded." If success means to freight one's own pockets, they did not succeed; but if a man has succeeded whose life has been a benefit to his fellow-men, whether it has benefited him personally or not, then they did succeed.

A man made an invention. He never got a dollar out of it. Indeed, he lost all he had in developing it. But it was a blessing to others.

Goodyear, of excellent memory and name, spent many weary years, and all his property, in the consummation of the discoveries which have blessed, economically, the whole world. Fortunately, during the last years of his life, he reaped some advantage from them. But suppose he had died without making a dollar; would he have lived in vain? He would have left the fruit of his thought, and he would not have lived in vain.

A man invents that which economizes force and multiplies comfort among the mass of men. The fruit of it slips out of his hand. Well, what then? "Ah!" people say, "so it is with the world. The men who think, and the men who create, are always thrown into the background, and the unworthy come forward and take the result of their living."

Woe to that man who feels that he has lived right only when he has lived to please himself. Blessed is that largeness of mind and heart which enables a man to say, "I have not shaken the tree, but I have planted the tree which other men shall shake. I have not dwelt in fair mansions; but I have laid the foundations, and done the work underground, which other men shall build up and complete. I have never been able to reap a harvest, but I have sown seed where no man had wrought before."

Let me, therefore, speak an encouraging word for the men who drift through society, and are said to be "rolling stones that gather no moss." Stones that roll ought to have no moss on them. They are said to be full of projects and plans, and it is said that these projects and plans result, not in their prosperity, but in other men's. They never sit down in their own houses and have quiet and abundance; but they are giving into the hands of others those hints by which they shall build a thousand dwellings.

Fortunate are we in the hopefulness of these precursors of society. Blessed is the society that is full of hopeful men. But there is a disease of hope, as well as a prophecy in hope. There is such a thing as perverted hopefulness. It is said that hope is a curse, when perverted, in the proportion in which it is a blessing in its natural state. Whether that be exactly true or not, it is true enough for all practical purposes. Hope, one of the greatest blessings that was ever given to man, when once perverted, is one of his greatest curses. It is hope, in one or other of its perverted forms, that leads men into all manner of gambling; and experience teaches us that the gambling spirit is one of the most mischievous, and one of the most incurable, of all the different kinds of mental disease.

This principle of unperverted hopefulness of which I have spoken, whose developments in society are so many and so pleasant, is specially needed, in the first place, by all those who endeavor to create in themselves the fabrics of a Christian character. My friends, you are called, not to a toilsome and burdensome life, unalleviated by promise or cheer. God knows full well that when he calls a young man who was born discordant in himself, and who carries in himself, it may be, the sins of his fathers and ancestors, and many of them in disproportion, that he calls him to rebuild himself. And do you not suppose that the eye of the loving Father discerns what the task is which consists in a man's living rightly; and do you not suppose, that God has compassion upon him not merely, but that he has thrown upon him cheer, and that he says to him, "Hope!" It is very easy, comparatively speaking, to avoid vice or crime. That which is not easy is to refashion a discordant character. Where men have elements, both of body and soul, that are ill mated, and where the process of right-living means a re-organization by which every part of the mind may join in harmony through the due and proper subordination of the lower to the higher, it is not easy. It is not done by any spiritual shock. It is not done by any momentary volition. It is the work of training. It runs through days, and weeks, and months, and years, and brings forth results from causes that a man can command.

Now, there are many who enter upon a Christian life almost even-minded. One of the benefits of Christian culture, and especially of derivative culture, where the father and mother, and their fathers and mothers, and theirs again, have been educated in Christian morals and Christian emotion, is, that moral feeling and moral excellence become interpreted to the moral faculties, and become strong and fruitful. The children of Christian parents find it

easier to be Christians or ought to than those whose ancestors were not in morals thoroughbred. Therefore multitudes of persons who come into the Christian life find their way comparatively prepared for them. And so, for all those whose violent temper, whose superabundant pride, whose timidity and fear, whose rough and rampant passions, are in perpetual rebellion against their reason; for all those who, after a laborious experience, bear witness that they carry in them a law of death, that the flesh is in antagonism with the spirit, and the spirit with the flesh, and that while they see the ideal of light, while truth and righteousness and honor are beautiful to them, they find themselves day by day coming short, and groveling in the dust or in the mire,—for all those there is hope, in the very nature of things.

You are introduced into the Christian life under such circumstances that your work is far more onerous than the work of other men. It takes more for some to be Christians, a hundred times, than for others. And do you suppose the all-loving Father does not distinguish the difference?

If you are called to a Christian life, to a higher manhood, to a nobler spiritual ideal, and you find your way beset and obstructed on every side, hope. God will wait for you, and be gentle with you. Ply, therefore, every instrumentality, and do not give up in despair, saying, "There is no use in attempting to be a Christian man. Others succeed; I cannot." Yes, others succeed, because they have more hope than you have, and press forward. Do you also press forward, hopefully. Take up the cross daily. Follow the God of hope, who is likewise the God of consolation. In all the combats to which men are called in the higher life, there is no providence more sustaining, and more needful, than that of hope.

How many, in divine providence, are appointed to poverty! I say *divine providence*, because I regard feebleness of constitution as a part of providence, and because I regard the unconscious habits with which many persons are brought up, as also included in the great scheme of providence. That part of natural law which is employed of God with direct cognition, is providence. And although poverty, in persons, largely depends upon place and time, opportunity or want of opportunity, skill or unskill, sagacity or the absence of sagacity, yet when a man is poor, having been rich, or without having tasted of riches, as the case may be, and when he finds himself perpetually at variance with his circumstances, surely, he needs the light of hope. Poverty is very bad. You may praise it as much as you please, but it is bad. It is very good in poems, but it is very bad in a house. It is very good in maxims, and it is

very good in sermons; but it is very bad in practical life. Everybody thinks that other people ought to bear poverty with composure; but nobody likes it, and it does not like anybody.

In a prosperous community, a single man may be poor and get along very well; but such is the relation of things in this world, that a poor community can never be eminent in anything. You cannot civilize poverty in a whole community. It is a part of the original economy of providence, that if men come up morally they must come up physically also.

So then, in life, poverty is a great evil, but it is not irremediable. We are not to praise it in overmeasure. Certainly, we are not to praise it as a positive virtue. There are circumstances which may help, somewhat, to alleviate it; but, after all, there is no better food than hope—not merely hope of a better day; not the hope that says, "Poverty is not the worst thing that can befall a man;" not the hope that leads one to say to his wife or child, "Take heart, my dear; we shall be in better circumstances by-and-by." That is very good; but there ought to be something better. That is the lowest form of hope. There is a hope that men may have which consists in a light seen ahead, and showing how short, in the nature of things, is the space in which the weary struggle between them and poverty can go on.

It is inconvenient, when you are in a foreign country, where you are not known, to lose all your money; it is troublesome to be out of funds in Vienna, or Rome, or any other strange city; and the fact that you have houses and lands, and are worth a million dollars, in New York, does not relieve your present necessities. You want money at once; and you cannot get along without it; but it really seems absurd to you. Nobody will trust you, you are likely to go without meals; and you fairly laugh, and say, "The idea! Here I am, swamped!" All your life long, you have been accustomed to have what you wanted. When you were at home, everybody ran to do you service. There is not a man in New York that, on hearing your name would not give you credit for any amount, and be proud to accommodate you,—and you suddenly find yourself without money and without credit. You are amused at it, and you say, "I would like, now, just to see how it feels to be poor." Forgetting your situation, you think you will make a pleasure trip, and you start for a hack; but soon you are reminded that you have no money, to pay for a ride. You have not even a sixpence to pay your fare in an omnibus. Under such circumstances, a man's feeling is, "I have money enough. I am debarred from the use of it just now, to be sure, but I have it;"—and the annoyances to which he is sub

jected seem ludicrous to him. A sense of humor comes over him. (And blessed is he who has a sense of the humorous. He has that which I think is worth more than money. If you can take off the grimness of life, if you can remove its asperities, by the use of wit and humor, you have it in your power to be a great benefactor. More light is thrown into darkness by the humorous element than by almost anything else. It is a perfect enchanter, that invests life with all manner of attractive features. Religion has sometimes been used to banish this element from society; but you might as well take the grease from the wheels of a wagon, and let them squeak. Imagination is that which makes life go smooth and easy.)

Now, in ten thousand ways, if men have poverty, if they have troubles and annoyances, if they have inconveniences, they may rise above them by the sense of hope. You are not poor, except among men. Is not your Father infinitely rich? This is not your home. It is beyond this world. Do you suppose a traveler at a caravansary thinks the cold, desolate, unfurnished building in which he rests and refreshes himself is his home? He is thankful for its shadow by day, and for its shelter at night; but these are only incidents of his journey. His home is not there. And, in the midst of poverty, men need to redeem themselves from its cares and torments by the light of hope. The future is beyond. You are not far from the end. God will, by-and-by, give you that which he holds for you; and then what will matter all the troubles and annoyances through which you have passed? "Overcome evil with good." Let hope dominate over fear and anxiety.

Hope is especially beneficial, also, to those who are in the struggles of daily duty in the affairs of life. In this land—especially in the Northwest—we are subject to meteorologic disturbances, to great whirlwinds, by which whole tracts of country are laid waste and made desolate. Villages are overthrown, and sometimes forests are torn up by the roots, in a moment.

And as it is in nature, so it is in society. There are sometimes commercial revulsions which are almost enough to ruin the whole community. We live so much on the principle of credit, we are so sanguine and hopeful, and we stretch out our arms so far, that, about every ten years, there passes over us a period of bankruptcy. As men will not reckon and settle as they go along, but are perpetually extending and extending, by-and-by the extension is such that every man is brought to a reckoning, sooner or later, by one of those sweeping commercial revulsions which compel every man to pay up, or to be bankrupt and begin again.

Besides these disturbances, there are ten thousand strains which are constantly coming upon individuals all the way through life. This man is thrown out of business. Sickness befalls another man, and destroys his prospects. Another man fails. Men in the midst of their career are brought to a dead stop. They are threatened with disaster on every side. What to do, they do not know. They need help; but it is not very pleasant to go and ask others to help them, or to be obliged to be helped. Being thrown out of their regular pursuits, they find it difficult to get into them again, or to enter upon anything new. It is hard to graft a man late in life. You can graft young buds into a new stalk, but old buds cannot well be grafted into an old stalk.

Thus men are often overthrown by their own mistakes; but they are quite as likely to be overthrown by their social liabilities, by their affiliations in society, by their connection with friends and neighbors. But, whatever be the cause, if this comes to them in mid-life, or late in life, it is most unfortunate, unless they are versatile, fruitful of resources, and hopeful in disposition. If despondency be superinduced upon disaster, in the case of any man, woe be to that man!

How blessed it is to have everything in one's self so ordered that when he is cast down he finds himself, not like clay that flattens out when it is thrown upon the ground, but like an India rubber ball, that springs back when it strikes any solid body. If a man is cast down to-day, let him say, "I shall be up again to-morrow." If he is destitute just now, let him say, "I shall have an abundance ere long." If he seems to be deserted by all mankind, let him say, "God will take care of me." If all looks dark and foreboding before him, let him say, "I shall come out right, though I do not now see my way clear."

When you are checked in your career, begin again. Do not let go of manhood and courage. Do not allow yourself to be overwhelmed by fear. The inward man is better than the outward man. Your life is more than food or raiment. Take care of the inside. Above all things, see to it that you do not give up. Hold on. In many and many a battle, victory has been wrested from defeat by the last strokes in the most desperate emergency. Many and many a man carries himself over the critical point by hopefulness.

But do you say, "I am too old to hope?" Do you say, "I have, constitutionally, too little hope?" Then open your heart to God. Think of him in the sweetest aspects of his nature. Draw near to him in his great providential relations. "I will not let a sparrow

fall to the ground without my notice," he says; "and are not you of much more value to me than many sparrows? If you, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; if no child ever came to an earthly father and asked for bread, and received a stone, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to them that ask him!" You are in need, and you know that he knows it. Draw on your faith and hope. This is the time for you to take those treasures which you have laid up in heaven. Be steadfast, unmovable. If, to-day, things are evil, look for better things to-morrow; and if they are evil to-morrow, look for better things the next day,—and so on to the end: for the worst thing that life can do to you is to kill you—and that is to crown you.

There are those who suffer in still other ways: as where the health itself is undermined; as where the mind becomes gloomy through morbid conditions of the body; as where men find themselves entirely shut up, and broken off from all the sources of ordinary enjoyment. While there are kinds of sickness that are quite compatible with the exercise of Christian feeling, there are other kinds which carry such distemperature that it is very difficult for a man under their influence to maintain hopefulness. But whatever your condition may be, do the best you can; and do not think that it is a part of the prerogative of sickness to bemoan one's state, and pity one's self. As much as possible, look away from yourself; look away from your pain and trouble; and as much as possible, look toward God. Even when you are under a cloud, and know that your distemperature is working its worst results upon your disposition and feeling, still rise as far as possible above it, and save yourself by hope. Why should a man forever brood on himself? Why should a man forever look in upon himself? Why should a man forever whirl round and round the circle of his own personal experience, till his head is so dizzy that he can see nothing? Why should a man so play the fool with himself?

Look up. Forget yourself as far as you can. Govern yourself in sickness. Forbid yourselves those things that are disallowable. As much as possible, fly out of your sufferings.

I have never seen insects that, if they fell into the water, did not attempt to fly out again as soon as possible. If some fish did not snap them up instantly, their nimble wings lifted them above the elements that entangled them, little by little; and when once they beat the free air again, they flew away rejoicing in their freedom.

If you are imperiled, if you are sunk in trouble, lift yourself upon your wings and fly—and hope is the soul's wings.

To those, likewise, who are brought through life to old age, there

is medicine in this subject. There are many experiences which, taken in general, are tolerable, but which, examined in all their bearings, are intolerable. It is a very painful thing to see a matron who has lived in toil forty-five or fifty years, spending herself upon her children, go back over her experience. One has died; another has died; still another has died. Another remains. Would to God he had died also! He is dead, but he is not buried, and will not down. Poverty comes in, with disappointment. And by-and-by she is alone. She is seventy years of age. She is worn and bent. She has nothing more to expect in life. This woman, whose life has been a heroism; this woman, who, all her life long, has not studied her personal comfort, but has plucked feathers from her own bosom to make the nest warm and soft for others,—she is cast out, and she goes, it may be, to the Home for the Indigent; it may be to the Poor-house. And it is sad enough.

If you sit down and think of the fine sensibilities in such persons that have to be sheathed; if you think how much they have to meet that is mortifying, you will see that these sensibilities, which were a source of enjoyment in early life, are, under such circumstances, only a source of suffering in later life. Criminals, and persons who are disgraced in society, are obliged to brutify themselves to prevent suffering in overmeasure. Thousands of persons late in life have to harden their hearts, or they are perpetually pierced by endless shames and annoyances.

But then, do not think of such things in that light. Do not think of what you suffer, or of what you might reasonably have hoped to possess. Take a larger view of the subject. If you can do nothing else, count the days, as boys in school do. I counted the months first, till there was but one left. Then I counted the weeks, of which there were only four. And when two or three of these were gone, I counted the days. Little by little, time passed away, and I looked eagerly for the close of the term, and I hailed the vacation without sleep and without appetite, so joyful and so excited was I.

Now, let persons in old age, cast out, dependent, helpless, and rasped on every side by misfortunes, stand and count the years, and months, and weeks, and days. It will be only a little while before you are on the other side—only a very few years; and what we call *years* are, on the great circle, but hours, but moments, you may say.

Cheer up, then, matron! Cheer up, old man, in disgrace! Take courage, all ye that have come to the conclusion that your life has been a mistake! No, it has not. It may be that you have laid up

more than you think. You have built no house; you have carried on no bank; you cannot count your friends by great numbers; there are thousands of things that men rejoice in here that you have not; but you do not know how many comfortable words you have dropped as seeds into the hearts of persons as you have gone along. You do not know how your kindness has thrown radiance on the paths of others. You do not know how much good you have done with your faith. You do not know how much you have lightened the burdens of your fellow-men by the example of your life. You have done more good than you have any idea of. Many of you have been ministers of mercy to those around about you. When you go hence, one, and another, and another, whom you have directly or indirectly helped in their trouble and trial, will throng the gate of heaven with gratitude. You will be surprised to learn how many know you that you do not know.

There is a life not far beyond this; and there is reason to hope, there is reason to believe, that the silver cords which are broken here shall be brought together again there; that the golden bowl shall be restored, never to be broken again; that the pitcher shall never more be broken at the fountain, nor the wheel at the cistern; and that there shall be joy in the presence of God over a noble community of men made perfect, and ransomed from the flesh. The experiences of this life are but so many lessons by which men learn of their nobler manhood and higher nature. Blessed things lie just before you.

Is it blustering February? and have you an oppressive sense of a severe winter? Is it March, with high winds, and untimely intimations of heat and cold? These are so many tokens of the coming of the spring. It is the breaking up of one season, and the coming in of another.

So, as infirmities multiply, as usefulness seems to decrease, as circumstances are limited, as more and more you are surrounded by evils which tend morbidly to discouragement and despondency, remember that we are saved by hope; remember that the hand of faith carries up with it trust in God; remember that the very genius and nature of that religion which you believe in is hopefulness; remember that the whole economy of God's providence is founded on hope; remember that the ministration of God's grace is keyed to hope. And hope on. Never yield up your faith until it lapses into fruition. You cannot hope too much; but you may easily despond too much.

And now, may the God of all hope be with you, and cheer you, and comfort you, and guide you, and bring you into the light of everlasting peace.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

THOU prayer-hearing God, we rejoice that, out of thine infinite goodness, thou art still willing to stoop unto us, and to listen to the cries of the most feeble and the most needy. Nor dost thou withhold these because of our unworthiness; for what man lives who could draw near to thee, if thou didst hide thyself from all except the just, and the pure, and the perfect. Thou hast thrust us far from thee, but art evermore drawing us nearer. Thou hast given us life in the lower spheres, and we are surrounded by ten thousand imperfections and annoyances; and thou givest us hope, that thou, in thy providence, and in thy love, and in thy mercy, art ever drawing us with affection and confidence toward thyself.

We thank thee that thou hast made it possible for thy servants, in days gone by, in the midst of darkness and trial and trouble, still to live by faith and by hope. We thank thee that thou hast granted to them the cordial of thine own spirit; and that by prayer they have been able to hold steadfastly on their way in spite of ten thousand discouragements. We rejoice that the same door is open to us; and that we, too, in the midst of care and trouble and sorrow, may draw near to thee in supplication. Nor need we know how thou wilt answer. Thou knowest thine own counsels; and we draw near to thee with all the confidence with which children supplicate a father. We would believe in thee, and in thy care of us, and in thy deep solicitude and love for us. And we pray that we may have begotten in us an implicit trust, and great hopefulness, not from what we are, but from what thou art. And so may we put our confidence in thee unto the very uttermost.

We beseech of thee that thou wilt grant to all in thy presence the spiritual benefit which they need. Revive thy work in any in whom the impressions of early love are growing dim and fading out. Restore to them the power of truth, and give to them the assurance of life. May they have new intuitions and new impulses.

Draw near, we pray thee, to those who are tempted by fear, by doubt, by the world in which they dwell, by its cares, by its solicitations of pleasure, by its various influences. We pray that thou will so clothe the world with thine own self that men may discern thee in it, and have pleasure, business, care, every labor, and pain itself, sanctified.

Wilt thou draw near to those whose households are filled with darkness and trouble. Let light arise from thee. Be with thy children in the night. If they be upon the sea, with contrary winds, and with waves running high, come thou unto them, even though thy coming terrify them.

And we pray that thou wilt cause thy blessing to rest upon all those who are learning from the afflictions and the providences which have laid them low. We beseech thee that thou wilt lift up those who are cast down, and comfort those who are despondent, and give light to those who are plunged into darkness.

How great is the way which our feet must climb! How many are the burdens which we must carry! How often must we drink the bitter cup! How many disappointments belong to life! What care, what toil, what anguish at times, what fears, what discouragements! And yet, thou God of hope, we rejoice that in all trial and trouble thou art steadfast. Grant that we may be able to come to thee in every time of need, and find thee a present help. Deliver us, we pray thee, from those fears and doubts which hide thee. Send what thou wilt, and take away what thou wilt: we are strong if thou dost remain to our consciousness. We are weak in the midst of unlimited abundance, if we have no hope and no God in the world. Grant, then, the sense of thine own presence, that it may bring joy and strength to bear with patience the burdens of each day.

Prepare us thus, in life, for the life to come. May we believe that thou art, by pain and by pleasure, by fear and by hope, by joy and by sorrow, schooling us for that higher and better life.

So may we rise at last, every one of us. And how far soever we may now be from thee, may we live in the hope of yet beholding thee, the hope of joy in the life to come—a hope not dead, but full of fruit. Quicken us, comfort us, inspire us; and when we shall have passed through these trials and temptations of the minor life, then may we rise to full manhood, and see thee, be like thee, and be satisfied.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son and Spirit. *Amen.*

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech thee that thy blessing may rest upon all those who are in this presence—upon those who are in discouragement; upon those who are suffering from remorse; upon those who are in deep sorrow; upon those who are in the midst of troubles, quick, sharp, gnawing; upon those who are overburdened; upon those who are bearing the yoke and carrying the cross; upon the disappointed ones. Thou art the One that didst bring light to dark places, and open prison-doors, and break off shackles, and release those that were in thrall and bondage; and grant, that from thine eyes may come the light of hope, as well as of love and cheer, to thy servants. May every one that is in thy presence now be thy servant, and hope in God. Thou art the Fountain of all good. It is sweeter for thee to give than to receive. Thy joy is in the joy of thy creatures. Grant that we may have faith in thee, trust in thee, wait patiently for thee, and not be ashamed to wait, feeling sure that thou wilt bear with us, and give victory at last, even to the weakest, as well as to those who are seemingly the strongest. And bring us safely to death. O blessed Door! O blessed Crown of life! Bring us more and more to see how sweet the face of Death is. Take from its brow all frowns. Take from its eyes all fierceness. Take from its lips all condemnation. May we behold death wonderingly, and say, "It is the coming of the Son of Man—of him that loved us and gave himself for us." O Jesus! thou that art the life, be our death, that we may have life and immortality in thee. And to the Father, the Son and the Spirit, shall be praises everlasting. *Amen.*

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